

DHS FIFTH SECRETARY'S AWARDS CATEGORIES

The below awards will be given out on the basis of nominations submitted from across the Department and will be awarded at the DHS annual employee awards celebration in the National Capital Region. [Click here to nominate](#) an individual or group for any of the categories below.

Secretary's Exceptional Service Award (Gold Medal)

This is the highest award for service granted by the Secretary of Homeland Security. The award will honor exceptional leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of unique national or international significance, reflecting great credit on the Department by markedly improving the security of our homeland. The Secretary may present the award to an individual or a group. *Typically, only one award in this category will be awarded annually.*

Secretary's Meritorious Service Award (Silver Medal)

This award is the second highest award presented by the Secretary and recognizes outstanding leadership, superior public service or unusually significant contributions to strengthening homeland security. It may recognize a body of work regarding remarkable innovation or notable resourcefulness and diligence that improved the effectiveness of one or more DHS missions. *No more than fifteen awards will be given out in this category annually.*

Secretary's Award for Valor

This award is the highest recognition for extraordinary acts of valor occurring either on or off duty. The employee will have demonstrated selfless response by performing courageously in a highly dangerous or life-threatening situation to protect another's life or to save significant assets or infrastructure from harm. Both civilian and military employees of the Department are eligible for this award. *Typically, only one award in this category will be awarded annually.*

Secretary's Award for Exemplary Service

This award recognizes exemplary individual service by DHS employees serving in administrative, technical, clerical and general support positions. Employees in support services positions below GS-11 and WG-8 can be nominated for this award. *It is expected that no more than fifteen of these awards will be distributed annually.*

Secretary's Award for Excellence

This award recognizes achievement or innovation by an individual or team engaged in work to advance the mission of the Department of Homeland Security. The work of the nominee(s) may have resulted in superior performance, significant operational improvements or notable innovation in support of DHS missions. A team nomination may be a result of an ongoing or *ad hoc* team. *Typically, 10-15 awards in this category will be awarded annually.*

Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Diversity Management

This award recognizes an employee who has excelled in efforts to promote diversity at DHS through outstanding leadership and innovation. It may acknowledge individual efforts exclusively within DHS or with external partners who assist DHS in meeting our commitment to diversity. *Typically, only one award in this category will be awarded annually.*

Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service

This award recognizes significant contributions by DHS employees who serve as volunteers with non-profit or community service programs or activities. The employee's contributions should be direct, sustained and have meaningful results for individuals or larger public good. *Typically, only one award in this category will be awarded annually.*

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS NOMINATION FORM](#)